

Putting Baby Safely to Sleep:

Tools for New Parent Support Program Home Visitors

This guidance provides useful ideas and resources for sharing important messages about putting baby safely to sleep with new and expectant parents.

Your role

Engage new and expectant parents, provide them with information, direct them to resources that educate them about safe infant sleep environments and practices and empower them to cope with infant sleep-related challenges.

The opportunities

- Ask parents about infant sleep challenges during home visits and other contacts, and whether they have questions about the **National Institutes of Health's recommended infant sleep guidelines**. Offer to provide one-on-one information related to their infant's sleep environment. Be sure to discuss the risks associated with fatigue while caring for an infant.
- Share safe sleep messages and resources with parents. Use the **American Academy of Pediatrics safe sleep information**, First Candle's brochure **Room Sharing is Safer than Bed Sharing*** and articles on safe sleep practices on **Military OneSource**.
- Share our archived blogs. Tell them about the archived blog series, **Sleep Like a Baby: The Keys to Infant Slumber**, designed especially for military parents.
- Partner with your local child development program to offer a parent group focused on the topic of safe infant sleep. Use the Consumer Product Safety Commission's video, **Safe Sleep for Babies**, to help you share your message.
- Participate in free **American Academy of Pediatrics online training** about creating safe sleep environments.

* The American Academy of Pediatrics and First Candle are private organizations. The Department of Defense does not control or endorse the content of these sites.

Key messages for new and expectant parents:

- Sleep is often one of the most significant challenges for new parents.
- One of the most important decisions new parents make is where and how they place a baby to sleep.
- Ensuring your baby is in a safe sleep environment involves closely monitoring your own personal level of alertness while caring for your infant.
- Safe sleep can save lives.

Key online resources:

- <http://www.militaryonesource.mil/parenting/safe-sleep-practices>
- <https://www.theparentreview.com/DoD/>
- <http://www.zerotothree.org/child-development/from-baby-to-big-kid/>
- <https://text4baby.org/>
- <http://www.extension.org/pages/22110/just-in-time-parenting-e-newsletters>



Providing policy, tools, and resources to further enhance the quality of life of service members and their families.